December 31, 2019

To Members of the Missouri General Assembly:

On behalf of the AMBER Alert System Oversight Committee, I present to you the committee’s draft inaugural report. Within this summary, you will find the following:

- An explanation of the changes in criteria and procedures for Missouri’s AMBER Alert System;
- A list of AMBER Alert System oversight Committee members and prospective members;
- Relevant statistics for the period of January 1, 2019 through November 30, 2019; and
- Minutes from the committee meeting on December 2, 2019.

During the AMBER Alert System Oversight Committee meeting, members and guests reviewed the new AMBER Alert process launched December 1, 2019. A demonstration of the new process confirmed that the new system is working properly.

Committee members acknowledge that 11 CSR 30-10.010 and 11 CSR 30-10.020 were rescinded effective October 30, 2019. Once all members of the committee have been confirmed, the AMBER Alert Oversight Committee will meet to revise the CSR 30 Chapter 10 – AMBER Alert and provide that information to the Missouri Secretary of State for inclusion in the Code of State Regulations. The committee will also vote on the adoption of the draft report. No new rules were promulgated during the December 2, 2019 committee meeting due to an absence of a quorum. The committee has no reimbursements to report.

There is no greater cause than the safety of our children. Ensuring that Missouri’s AMBER Alert system is efficient and immediate is of the utmost importance to the members of the oversight committee. The system unveiled December 1 is designed to disseminate information to law enforcement, the media and the public in a manner that greatly increases the possibility of safely recovering abducted children.

Sincerely,

Sandra K. Karsten
Director, Department of Public Safety
Chair, AMBER Alert System Oversight Committee
Mission Statement

The mission of the AMBER Alert Program is to develop and coordinate the efforts of law enforcement, the media, and transportation in order to increase public participation in safely recovering abducted children through targeted education, increased communication, and effective sharing of resources.

AMBER Alert History

The national AMBER Alert plan was created in 1996 after nine-year-old Amber Hagerman was kidnapped and murdered while riding her bicycle in Arlington, Texas. Missouri’s AMBER Alert plan was formed in 2003, following the Missouri General Assembly’s passage of Senate Bill 30.
Contents

AMBER Alert System Oversight Committee Members......................... 6
Technical Update............................................................................. 7
AMBER Alert Criteria .................................................................. 8
Updated Procedures ..................................................................... 9
AMBER Alert Statistics ................................................................ 10
September 2019 Discussion ........................................................... 11
December 2019 Agenda................................................................. 12
December 2019 Meeting Minutes .................................................. 13-15
Section 210.1014 RSMo. states, “There is hereby created the ‘AMBER Alert System Oversight Committee’ whose primary duty shall be to develop criteria and procedures for the AMBER Alert system and shall be housed within the Department of Public Safety.” In 2019, HB 397, known as “Hailey’s Law” was signed into law. Hailey’s Law requires the AMBER Alert System Oversight Committee to meet at least annually and provide an annual report.

Members:

Chair, Director Sandra K. Karsten, Missouri Department of Public Safety

Captain John J. Hotz, Missouri State Highway Patrol

Child Care Program Specialist Christine Wynn, Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services

Members Appointed December 13, 2019, Pending Confirmation:

Iron County Sheriff Stephen Korte, Missouri Sheriffs’ Association

Pike County Sheriff Roger Medley, Missouri Sheriffs’ Association

News Director Bridget Lovelle, KY3 and KSPR, Television Broadcasters’ Representative

Members To Be Appointed:

Two representatives of the Missouri Police Chiefs Association

One representative of small market radio broadcasters

One representative of large market radio broadcasters
In 2019, the Missouri State Highway Patrol implemented the following enhancements to the Missouri AMBER Alert System:

- A new public website, located at www.moalerts.mo.gov, provides the most up-to-date information and photos associated with an active AMBER Alert.
- Members of the media and the public have the ability to subscribe to receive email notifications anytime an AMBER Alert is issued or updated.
- AMBER Alerts have been integrated with social media to include the automatic posting of alert information to the Patrol’s Facebook and GHQ Twitter feeds.
- There is now a direct connection to the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS) for the direct issuance of Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) and Emergency Alert System (EAS) broadcast messages without requiring the use of an intermediary.
- Text-to-speech capabilities automatically convert text-based alert information to audible speech for playback over radio and television.
- Law enforcement agencies that utilize the newest version of the Missouri Uniform Law Enforcement System (MULES) are now able to make an electronic request for the issuance of an AMBER Alert.

The Missouri State Highway Patrol continues work on further enhancements:

- Future training for law enforcement.
- Further streamlining regarding the ability of law enforcement agencies to make electronic requests for the issuance of AMBER Alerts in MULES and the Regional Justice Information System (REJIS).
- Developing an enhanced public Application Program Interface (API) that will allow for the electronic sharing of active AMBER Alert information on various public media platforms such as electronic billboards.
- Expanding the number of characters allowed in the transmission of a WEA text message in accordance with enhancements FEMA is making available as part of IPAWS 2.0.
There have been no changes to the AMBER Alert activation criteria in 2019. The AMBER Alert activation criteria are as follows:

- Law enforcement officials have reasonable belief that an abduction has occurred which meets the definition in Section 565.110 or 565.115 RSMo.
- Law enforcement officials believe there is a credible threat of serious bodily injury or death to the victim.
- Enough descriptive information exists about the victim and the abductor for law enforcement to issue an AMBER Alert.
- The victim of the abduction is a child 17 years of age or younger.
- The child’s name and other critical data elements — including the child abduction (CA) flag — have been entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) system.

Note: Parental disputes do not apply unless a possibility of harm to the child has been determined.
These are the procedures for requesting an AMBER Alert effective December 1, 2019:

1. Trained local law enforcement personnel in the community where the abduction occurred must first determine if all the activation criteria are met.

2. If the activation criteria have been met, the local agency should contact the Missouri State Highway Patrol Troop F Headquarters at (573) 751-1000 and request an AMBER Alert. Troop F Communications will contact the state AMBER Alert coordinator or their designee and initiate a conference call between the local agency, Troop F Communications, and the coordinator or designee. After a brief discussion regarding the abduction and each criteria section, the coordinator or designee will make the decision whether the situation meets the criteria of an AMBER Alert. If the decision is made to activate the AMBER Alert system, Troop F Communications will take the abduction information over the telephone from the local agency and initiate the alert process.

3. If not already completed, the local agency must initiate a Missing Person computer entry in MULES as required in the National Child Search Act (42 U.S.C. 5779, 5780).

4. The local agency should also fill out the AMBER Alert request form in MULES 5 (type AMBER in the command line). This form sends a message via MULES to Troop F Communications to notify them of the pending AMBER Alert request. If the agency needs assistance filling out the AMBER Alert form, Troop F Communications can assist the agency.

5. If the local agency does not have access to the AMBER Alert request form in MULES 5, a representative of the agency should complete a Missouri AMBER Alert Abduction Form found on the Missouri State Highway Patrol website under “Missing Persons” at the top of the page. This form can be emailed to moalerts@mshp.dps.mo.gov or faxed to Troop F Headquarters at (573) 751-6814. Contact Troop F Communications at (573) 751-1000 to verify the email/fax was received. Once approved, Troop F Communications will disseminate the alert.

6. If the coordinator or designee does not believe the situation meets the required criteria for an AMBER Alert, other options can be explored.
2019 Statistics (January 1 to November 30, 2019):

- 18 Missouri AMBER Alert requests received by Highway Patrol Troop F
- 4 requests met Missouri AMBER Alert criteria:
  - 3 AMBER Alerts were broadcast (total of 4 children located safe)
  - 1 child located safe prior to AMBER Alert broadcast
- 2 children located safe prior to verification that AMBER Alert criteria was met
- 5 requests were instead issued as an Endangered Person Advisory (EPA)
- 7 requests did not meet Missouri AMBER Alert or other alert criteria

(These figures may differ from monthly report totals as alerts are continually being updated.)

Approved Missouri AMBER Alerts 2003-2019*

* AMBER Alerts began in 2003 in Missouri; Statistics for 2019 cover January 1-November 30.

Terms:

- Approved (AMBER Alert) – an AMBER Alert request has been determined by the Highway Patrol to meet Missouri AMBER Alert criteria and will be prepared for broadcast dissemination.
- Broadcast (AMBER Alert) – an AMBER Alert was sent out by the Highway Patrol.
- In addition to AMBER Alerts, Missouri utilizes Endangered Person Advisories, Silver Alerts, and Blue Alerts:
  - Endangered Person Advisory – may be issued regardless of age if a person is missing and believed to be in danger due to some reason, including being in the company of a potentially dangerous person.
  - Silver Alert – may be issued in cases where a missing adult is 60 years of age or older and believed to suffer from a cognitive impairment.
  - Blue Alert – may be issued in cases where a law enforcement officer was killed or seriously injured in the line of duty or is missing in connection with official duties.
On September 11, 2019, representatives from the Department of Public Safety, Missouri State Highway Patrol, State Emergency Management Agency, National Weather Service, and Missouri Broadcasters Association discussed the criteria and procedure for issuing a Missouri AMBER Alert, and technical enhancements to the system. Representatives from the Missouri Broadcasters Association expressed concern regarding the lack of “text to speech” capabilities. They were reassured these concerns would be eliminated once the new system was live. The MBA representatives also mentioned back-up solutions for Emergency Alert System messages. Representatives from the National Weather Service discussed the potential of broadcasting AMBER Alerts on NOAA Weather Radio in the state. Missouri has 18 NOAA Weather Radio transmitters located throughout the state, providing life-saving weather and public safety information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This weather radio technology is capable of reaching the vast majority of the state, including areas that generally lack cell phone coverage. Work is currently being performed to enable AMBER Alerts to be automatically broadcast and tone-alerted on NOAA Weather radios across Missouri. The Highway Patrol representatives provided statistics and descriptions for specific Missouri AMBER Alerts issued in 2019.
Amber Alert System Oversight Committee Meeting
Monday, December 2, 2019, 1330 hours
Department of Public Safety - 1101 Riverside Drive, Jefferson City, MO
1st Floor Independence Creek Conference Room

Attendees:
- Director Sandra K. Karsten, DPS
- Captain John J. Hotz, MSHP PIED
- Child Care Program Specialist Christine Wynn, DHSS
- Captain Corey J. Schoeneberg, MSHP Troop F
- Director J. Corey Chaney, MSHP Communications Division
- Chief Operator James M. Parks, MSHP Communications Division
- Assistant Director Jeffrey D. Reece, MSHP CJIS

Welcome and Introductions — Director Karsten

Actions since last meeting and summary of Hailey’s Law — Captain Hotz

AMBER Alert statistics for 2019 — Captain Schoeneberg

Communications Update — Director Chaney

AMBER Alert Technical Upgrade — Director Reece

DHSS Update — Child Care Program Specialist Christine Wynn

Discussion of AMBER Alert System Oversight Committee Annual Report
— Captain Hotz

Adjournment.

This fictitious AMBER Alert demonstrated to meeting attendees how an alert will appear on the new website.
AMBER Alert System Oversight Committee Meeting

The committee met at 1:30 p.m., December 2, 2019, at the Lewis & Clark Building in Jefferson City, Missouri.

Members Present:
Chair, Director Sandra K. Karsten, DPS
Captain John J. Hotz, MSHP
Child Care Program Specialist Christine Wynn, DHSS

Members Absent Pending Appointment/Confirmation:
Two representatives of the Sheriff’s Association
Two representatives of the Missouri Police Chief’s Association
One representative of small market radio broadcasters
One representative of large market radio broadcasters
One representative of television broadcasters

Guests/Presenters:
Deputy Director Kenny Jones, DPS
Communications Director Mike O’Connell, DPS
Captain Corey J. Schoeneberg, MSHP
Communications Division Director J. Corey Chaney, MSHP
Assistant Director CJIS Jeffrey D. Reece, MSHP
Chief Operator James M. Parks, MSHP
Computer Information Technology Specialist II Tonya M. Schaben, MSHP
Public Information Specialist III Cheryl D. Cobb, MSHP

The AMBER Alert System Oversight Committee does not have a quorum. An additional seven members are to be appointed by the governor.

DPS Director Karsten opened the meeting and introductions were made.

Captain Hotz provided an update of the AMBER Alert group meeting on September 11, 2019, and summary of Hailey’s Law (Section 210.1014 RSMo.). The AMBER Alert System Oversight Committee’s last meeting was held on October 15, 2015, at Troop F Headquarters. No minutes are available from that meeting. Although there were no formal meetings, the group responsible for AMBER Alerts remained active in other ways:

In 2016, AMBER Alert training was made available to local law enforcement agencies in each Highway Patrol troop area. An additional training session was provided to the Missouri Sheriffs’ Association. The training covered how the system

Continued on next page
worked and proper procedures to issue an AMBER Alert. Troop F employees have made themselves available to assist local law enforcement agencies early on in the process to help disseminate the information more quickly.

In 2017, an attempt was made to introduce a new AMBER Alert system using MULES 4. This proved to be a cumbersome process and did not produce the desired result. MSHP Troop F/MSHP Communications Division/MSHP Criminal Justice Information Services Division representatives continued to explore ways to improve the AMBER Alert process. The new AMBER Alert system [Mo Alerts] launched December 1, 2019.

AMBER Alert group members continued to engage with representatives of the Missouri Broadcasters Association since the October 2015 meeting.

Review of Hailey’s Law: Director Sandra Karsten clarified that “Reimbursements” in subsection 8.5 refers to travel reimbursements for travel of those committee members from outside the Department of Public Safety. Reimbursements will be handled through the DPS budget.

Captain Corey J. Schoeneberg provided the following AMBER Alert statistics for the period of January 1, 2019 through November 30, 2019*.

**2019 Statistics (January 1 to November 30, 2019):**

- 18 Missouri AMBER Alert requests received by Highway Patrol Troop F
- 4 requests met Missouri AMBER Alert criteria:
  - 3 AMBER Alerts were broadcast (total of 4 children located safe)
  - 1 child located safe prior to AMBER Alert broadcast
- 2 children located safe prior to verification that AMBER Alert criteria was met
- 5 requests were instead issued as an Endangered Person Advisory (EPA)
- 7 requests did not meet Missouri AMBER Alert or other alert criteria

(These figures may differ from monthly report totals as alerts are continually being updated.)

Patrol Communications Division Director J. Corey Chaney explained that MULES 4 did not meet expectations, but served to move the project forward toward a simpler method. No Patrol communications equipment is involved in sending an alert under the new system. The messages are sent via the Patrol's Criminal Justice Information Services Division or RAVE (a commercial notification system that provides the Patrol with backup access to IPAWS). Troop B also serves as a backup to the system.

MSHP CJIS Assistant Director Jeffrey Reece and MSHP CJIS CITII Tonya Schaben provided a demonstration of the Mo ALERTS web page and showed those in attendance how an alert is issued/updated. As of the time of the committee meeting, 628 subscriptions had been activated by the public and media outlets. The

*Continued on next page*
new system allows for a WEA message to go out as soon as possible, which is then updated as more information develops.

There is a date and time stamped audio log. Media outlets can access this information via the website.

Future plans were discussed, including the use of text messages. Currently, there are concerns that the infrastructure would not have the capacity to handle an extremely large number of attempts to follow the link simultaneously. The program can translate information into a voice message. Future plans also include targeted alerts, which could send a text to only one county or region. However, broadcasters indicated they would not be able to target alerts without upgrading their systems.

Currently, MULES 5 is being rolled out to law enforcement agencies. This version of MULES will allow law enforcement agencies to electronically request that an AMBER Alert be issued. MULES 5 will be implemented in the Troop I region first and then other troop regions will be incorporated going forward. While this is ongoing, CJIS will also be working to further streamline integration with both MULES and REJIS.

DHSS Child Care Program Specialist Christine Wynn participated in the discussion, but had nothing to report from the DHSS Child Care Program at this time.

Those present reviewed the requirements of the AMBER Alert System Oversight Committee’s annual report.

AMBER Alert System Oversight Committee Chair Karsten asked that the annual report be in booklet form. MSHP personnel were assigned to create a draft for the committee to review/approve. Future AMBER Alert system training plans should be included in the report. The annual report will cover through November 30 of each year for statistics; other committee business will be from August 28, 2019, when the new law went into effect. A list of possible committee members should be included in the annual report, although they would be awaiting confirmation at the time it is published. Group discussion led to a consensus that a representative from a cellular phone carrier would be a good addition to the oversight committee.

Captain Hotz set a deadline for annual report submissions at December 11, 2019. A draft of the annual report is expected to the committee chair by December 16. It is due to legislators by January 1, 2020.

Additional discussion covered the fact that the “hub” handling the AMBER Alert system needs layers of backup. It handles a large number of transactions and messages from MULES, NLETS, etc.

Meeting adjourned at 2:23 p.m.